

THE FOLLOWING C A S E OF THE

People of FARNHAM, in the County of SURRY, is humbly submitted to the Consideration of their Christian Brethren, who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in Sincerity, and are desirous of spreading the glad Tidings of his everlasting Gospel.

FOR more than a century past, the Gospel was not preached at FARNHAM, till about the year 1786; when it pleased the LORD, in his good Providence, to send among us the Rev. Mr GUNN, whose faithful labours, in public and private, for the space of six years, were remarkably owned and blessed, to the turning great numbers of the inhabitants of FARNHAM, and the adjacent villages, from darkness to light.

The great success which attended the preaching of this faithful servant of GOD, excited the natural enmity of the hearts of many wealthy people, at whose instigation the Rector dismissed him from the church, of which he was only the afternoon-preacher; and since that, he has been turned out of the church at ODIHAM, a place about eight miles distant, where he used to preach in the morning.

During the latter part of Mr GUNN's ministry, we met, by his approbation, at different places in the town, for prayer and reading the Scriptures. At these meetings we used to sing the praises of God, and read a printed evangelical Sermon, for our improvement in religious knowledge. But the enemies of the Gospel, who had been active in turning Mr GUNN out of the church, encouraged a mob to interrupt our worship, and to pelt us with stones and brick-bats. At length the inhabitants, menaced by the rich, and insulted by the rabble, were afraid to let us assemble on their premises; nor could we procure a room, though we offered more than the usual rent.

Thus persecuted and driven from place to place, and at last refused every kind of accommodation, we were under the necessity of purchasing and licensing a place, that we might assemble together under the protection of the Toleration Act.

Here, for a while, we were occasionally favoured with a Gospel Sermon from some of the neighbouring Ministers; but the Clergyman of the church demanded a fight of the licence; who, though he knew it was properly registered in the Bishop's Court, as the Act directs, yet he persisted in declaring it to be illegal.

The mob, encouraged by this declaration, and set on by several opulent people, thinking they might do to us what they pleased with impunity, persecuted us in such an outrageous manner, that the lives of several of our friends were in danger.

On the evening of Easter Sunday last, about 300 of us being assembled together to worship GOD, according to the dictates of our consciences, and conformable to the laws of our country, we were so rudely assaulted within doors, and without, that with the greatest difficulty, through a back-door, we made our escape.

On the Thursday following, a minister from Guildford came to preach; but a most daring outrageous mob commenced such a riot, throwing stones and brick-bats in at the windows, that the congregation were again obliged to flee for their lives. The peace-officers demanded assistance from the military, being of themselves incapable of quelling the riot. Their request was granted; but the danger was so great, that our friends desired us, for a while, to desist from meeting together.

Notwithstanding these violent persecutions, the spirit of hearing increased. After seeking the LORD in prayer for his direction, we submitted our Case to several respectable ministers, in town and country, who advised us to build a place for public worship. With fear and trembling we began this undertaking, knowing that the expence would far exceed our abilities to discharge: but the LORD has inclined the hearts of his dear people to help us, beyond our most sanguine expectations; and we have been enabled to get the building so forwarded, as to have it opened (though in an unfinished state) on the 16th of October, 1793, when the Rev. Mr MATTHEW WILKS, Mr FORD, and Mr EYRE, came down from LONDON, and each of them preached a Sermon on the occasion. Several hundreds of people attended the opening; and ever since the place has been crowded, especially on Sunday evening.

The people of the town being over-awed by the wealthy and powerful opposers, we could procure no place upon more reasonable terms than that on which our building is erected, which cost us 150l. as it is a freehold, and had two little tenements standing on it, which were taken down.

The building, when finished, will cost at least 650l. which, with the purchase-money of the ground, and 70l. spent in prosecuting the most notorious offenders, (an account of which has been given in the County Chronicle, as mentioned on the wrappers of the fifth number of the Evangelical Magazine,) amount to 870l.—Serious persons, who have seen our Case, and the names of the ministers who have recommended it, have given so liberally, that upwards of 400l. have already been collected; and, to enable us to discharge the remainder, we are under the necessity of requesting similar assistance from our Christian Brethren of all denominations.

We have the happiness to say, that our Case is approved of, and strongly recommended by the following respectable Ministers, (among others), who have not only signed their names, but kindly assisted us.

Rev. T. WILLS, Ilington
J. EYRE, Hackney
W. PERCY, Woolwich
ROWLAND HILL, London
MATT. WILKS, Ditto
T. PRIESTLEY, Ditto
J. A. KNIGHT, Ditto
J. SOUTH, Guildford
J. JEFFERSON, Basingstoke
R. SLOPER, Devizes
W. BISHOP, Wells

Rev. W. GREEN, Bath
D. BOGUE, Gosport
W. KINGSBURY, Southampton
J. WINTER, Newbury
J. DAWSON, Evesham
A. WICKINS, Dunmow
J. DUNCAN, Winbournminster
T. SWAIN, Walworth
G. HOBBS, Colchester
W. JAY, Bath
T. HALL, Alton

Rev. R. FRY, Bellericay
J. THOROGOOD, Bocking, Essex
M. ANDREWS, Coggeshall
J. M. RAY, Sudbury
C. ATKINSON, Ipswich, Suffolk
Z. HUBBARD, Milford
W. LOVE, Southwark
J. HAY, Bristol
S. BREWER, Stepney
T. WILLIAMS, Ditto

ON the 16th of OCTOBER, 1793, we preached at FARNHAM, at the opening of the new place of worship, and were eye-witnesses of the great spirit of hearing which it has pleased GOD to give to the inhabitants of that town and neighbourhood. We made particular inquiries of Mr. GUNN, and many of the neighbouring Ministers who attended, and find it is their unanimous opinion, that it is likely to be a very important stand for the Gospel. At FARNHAM, there are not less than five hundred families, many of whom have an ardent desire to hear the word of GOD. And the adjacent villages, which have long been in total darkness, begin to see the difference, and, to all appearance, would be willing to receive the Gospel, if it could be sent among them.

The injuries these poor people have sustained, the persecutions they have endured, the number of lively serious persons among them, the evident appearances of GOD in their behalf, and the dark and deplorable state of the country for many miles around, loudly call for the generous exertions of all those who wish to support the cause of CHRIST, and extend the boundaries of his kingdom. We therefore gladly embrace this opportunity (in addition to what two of us have already written) to recommend, in the most earnest manner, this extraordinary Case of the people of FARNHAM, to the particular attention of all our dear and well-beloved Christian friends.

JOHN EYRE.
M. WILKS.
GEORGE FORD.

FARNHAM, NOVEMBER 26, 1793.

THE Case of the People at FARNHAM, as before stated, is strictly true: my connection and acquaintance with them, enables me to say this, from my own personal knowledge. Their Chapel is now nearly finished; but the collections they have hitherto made, are by no means adequate to the heavy expences the buildings, &c. have incurred. And unless the kind friends of the Gospel will farther assist them, they must, even now, be brought into very serious difficulties.

WM ALPHONSUS GUNN,
Lecturer of ST. MARY SOMERSET, London.